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WASHINGTON REPORT.
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MISSILE SALES TO JORDAN UNFORTUNATE

Without a word of floor debate or a vote, Congressional inaction on the missile sale to Jordan made that sale final.

The story behind Congressional acquiescence to the \$25 million HAWK deal is a disturbing but, nevertheless, instructive one. In July, those of us in Congress opposed to the sale were successful in convincing our colleagues that HAWK missiles to Jordan would disturb military stability in the Middle East and, worst of all, force Israel to fight on a Third Front in the event of another Arab-Israeli war.

Under the Foreign Military Sales Act of 1974, Congress voted a Resolution of Disapproval, thus killing the HAWK deal.

Both King Hussein and the Ford Administration were stunned that Congress actually used the powers given to it in the 1974 arms approval bill. When the negotiations had taken place between the Administration officials and Jordanian leaders no one had even mentioned the Congress of the United States.

The Jordanians were probably not even aware that a vote of Congress could block the sale. Top-level Americans, though probably aware of the technical powers of Congress, took Congress for granted and assumed there would be no action against what appeared to be "routine arms sales to a friendly country."

Both President Ford and King Hussein moved swiftly to resurrect the HAWK proposal. The King's move was by far the most shocking and, probably,

the most effective. He openly threatened to buy a missile system equivalent to the HAWK from the Soviet Union! There was no doubt that the Soviet Union could, if it so desired, supply Jordan with a sophisticated anti-aircraft missile system. What came as a shock was the willingness of King Hussein, whom everyone had regarded as by far the most "pro-Western" of the Arab leaders, to openly discuss the possibility of a military alliance with the U.S.S.R.

The Administration emphasized the purely defensive intention of the HAWK proposal and took advantage of Congressional fear of a Jordan - U.S.S.R. military relationship. The President resubmitted the HAWK proposal.

Opponents of the HAWK proposals recognized soon after it was voted down that the war was not over. Senator Clifford Case and Congressman Jonathan Bingham authored Resolutions of Disapproval for the Senate and House respectively. We were prepared for another White House - Congress fight over the HAWKS. Meanwhile, Administration officials began earnest talks with both King Hussein and key members of Congress. They sought to modify the proposals so as to overcome the objections of at least some of the HAWK opponents.

The Jordanian government finally agreed to having the missiles permanently installed rather than mobile -- thus reducing the likelihood that they would be put to offensive use. Also, the Jordanians agreed not to put the missiles under a joint military command with Syria without written consent of the President.

Senator Case, an honorable and highly competent man, believed the new HAWK proposals were acceptable. He announced he would not bring his resolution of disapproval to a vote in the Senate. Congressman Bingham, though still

filled with misgivings about the HAWK deal, had no choice but to withdraw his opposition. Automatically, after the set time elapsed without a negative Congressional vote, permission for the sale was granted.

I believe the HAWK sale was a mistake. I believe that the threat by Jordan to buy from the Soviets was a bluff which the United States ought to have called.

I have told this story in such detail so that my readers might realize to how great an extent foreign military sales arrangements are made by the White House and not by Congress. The Foreign Military Sales Act of 1974 did not go far enough to correct this imbalance. Nevertheless, the compromises reflected in the second version of the HAWK deal indicate that now Congress has at least some say so in these crucial matters.

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